

1 Peter 1; Minneapolis Conference

by Bob Bruton

Bob Bruton's sermon emphasizes the importance of a changed life and the call for Christians to actively witness in a world that is spiritually dead.

Duration: 44:23

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 1:1, Romans 1:1, 1 Peter 1:3-5, Revelation 22:1

Topics: "Conference"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of witnessing and sharing the word of God with others. He emphasizes the power of a transformed life as a testimony to the world. The speaker believes that God gives everyone at least one chance to be saved, and it is up to the individual to accept or reject it. He encourages believers to let their lives shine as a witness and to reflect the victory of a Christian life. The sermon also includes a personal story about the speaker's father's conversion to Christianity after many years of not knowing Christ.

Transcript

Among the flocks of Calvary, Christ ye, ye blest, O wondrous magic met. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, except his word, ye'll wash your sins away. He saves us by grace, matchless grace.

O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. He saves us by grace, matchless grace. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away.

He saves us by grace, matchless grace. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. He saves us by grace, matchless grace.

O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. He saves us by grace, matchless grace. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away.

He saves us by grace, matchless grace. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. He saves us by grace, matchless grace.

O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. He saves us by grace, matchless grace. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away.

He saves us by grace, matchless grace. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. He saves us by grace, matchless grace.

O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away. O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your sins away.

O, how wonderful, if you do not believe on him, ye'll wash your and just a thought at the end in verse 5, if we have time to get through verses 1 and 2. We see in these two verses compared with verse 5, three steps in conversion. And interestingly enough, they are all three God's steps. We don't have anything to do with it.

In verse 5, we see our steps. But before we come to these thoughts, let's look at verse 1 for a thought to us who are already Christians. Those of us who want to make our lives count for Christ.

Peter, it says, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Now, one night this week, I shared with you my own personal way of studying God's word. And I like to say that sometimes we think that we are not Bible students because it takes a lot of books and a lot of time and a lot of money.

But really, this is not necessarily true. For \$100, any of you, or either \$50, as far as that goes, you can build yourself a compact library which will enable you in less than five years to become a real student of the word of God. In fact, in three years, if you study one chapter a week, you will have studied chapter by chapter, verse by verse, and word for word, every word in the New Testament epistles.

That is, starting in Acts 1.1 and going through to Revelation chapter 22. If you studied one chapter a week, furthermore, if you studied for five years rather than three years, two more years, that would take in one chapter a week, every chapter in all four Gospels. Which means that in five years, if you really wanted to become a student of the word of God, in five years you would have a grasp of the word of God that no one could ever take away from you.

And this is what our churches are needing today more than ever before, men who will put time into it. Now, the way to do it is to go down to your bookstore and order 15 or 20 different translations of the Scriptures, anywhere from \$2 to \$5 a translation. And go home and get yourself a desk down in the basement or in the bedroom or somewhere where you can leave these books and not be bothered.

The children won't get to them, and others won't have to move them. And prepare yourself a little cubbyhole somewhere where you come on your spare time and free time to study God's word. And you know, you can do this about an hour a week or two or three hours a week.

If you're off night, set aside some time and do it. Now, this is the time that I'm going to study God's word on my own, and I'm going to let God the Spirit pour it in. And then you see, you've got something to give out when you're doing door-to-door work.

You've got something fresh to give out when you're witnessing to the person at school or down at work or in the coffee hour or wherever you may be. And so you can spend more public time witnessing, you see. The way to do it, just take your Bible and set it in front of you here.

And I caught it around the clock study. I started about one o'clock, and I lined these translations all the way around my desk and read a verse and then read that same verse and every one of these translations.

In fact, you'll find that you'll have the answer to most of the verses just by reading it that way.

However, then over in the back, back here, coming from about six o'clock round to nine o'clock, I try to have at least three good commentators on the verse. When I started Romans, I had Kenneth Wiest, Harry Ironside, Newell, Gabalind, and a few others. And so I would read the verse all the way around, and I would take what they had to say word for word, all these verses, and come back around until about eleven o'clock.

And then I would have a piece of paper here beside my Bible, and I would write down verse one. The first word is here, Peter. And I would go around the clock and see what they all had to say about Peter.

And this is hard work. In fact, every thirty minutes you hear me preach, I must confess, it takes eight hours of study, a full day of preparation. But you'll find that you can study a chapter in eight hours.

And so if you'd put two hours in Bible study on Saturday after you've cut the grass and washed the car and did all the Saturday work, and then an hour a night for the other six nights or five nights, three hours on Saturday work, in less than five years' time you can... Now, this is what I have recently enjoyed doing with Peter. And so we'll share with you, first Peter, one in two. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, and incidentally I hope that if I ever come back through here in the future, some of you sitting right there in the audience will be up doing the same thing.

This is what I believe that God's people are hungry for. Want the faith of the Lord, and with authority and with proof for what you say. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

Now, the word Peter here, of course, tells us who the inspired writer of the letter is. His original name, you remember, is Simon. If you turn back into John chapter one in verse 42, and you don't have to, but you find that the Lord changed his name from Simon to Cephas.

And the word Cephas here is the Aramaic word for the Greek word Peter. And so Cephas and Peter mean the same thing. And it's a descriptive, I believe, it's a descriptive title of what Peter would someday be like.

He says, Simon, I'm going to change your name to Cephas, or Peter. And the word Peter or Cephas means a detached but large fragment of rock. And this is descriptive of what Peter was like after the day of Pentecost.

He was a dynamic individual. He was a man with a message, and he didn't mind giving it out. But before that day in which the Spirit of God came upon Peter, he was a weak, chicken noodle, jellyfish type person.

In fact, there never was anyone, I believe, in the Bible that tried and failed. At least he tried, thank God for that. But he tried and failed.

One day he would run cold, the next day run hot. Off and on, up and down type person. You know, I love to read after Peter, because Peter is so much like me.

Somehow or another I find it difficult to reach Paul. He's a so much better man. You don't see the failures in Paul, even though he admits them in Romans 7 and other places.

But poor old Peter, always sticking his foot in his mouth, a tremendous contortionist. Always getting in trouble, bumping into the wall. One day he's burning up for the Lord, the next day he's a failure.

Cold and hot, up and down. But you know, this was Peter before the day of Pentecost. And after that day, after that encounter with the Spirit of God, sure enough, he became a man with a rock-like character.

He had determination that would not quit. And he changed the people of his time with the gospel. And the people of the world today have been changed.

In fact, the great thing that divides the people of the world is whether or not Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners. And our whole world is divided over that one point. This is why we have communism.

They don't believe it. And while many in America do not believe it, the thing that divides the free world today is this very fact. Is He or is He not the Son of God, and did He or did He not die for our sins? Well, now, for those of us who are Christians here, I'd like to make a very practical application.

When you come to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible teaches in Ephesians and everywhere else, as far as that goes, that He makes His abode there. And you'll never leave until the Lord takes you home to Heaven. And in that sense, every one of us, regardless of who we are or what we are or what we were before we were saved, regardless of how negative we were, regardless of how pessimistic we were, regardless of how introvert we may have been, the Spirit of God can give you and make you a person with a rock-like determination.

Can you have it today? It seems to me that there's something unreal about a person who has no dynamics in his life, no thrill of witnessing for Christ, no determination, but just going along with the time. Any dead fish can go down the tide. It takes a live fish to go up, you see.

And I believe that the heart of the message of God's Word is that we should be Christians with a rock-like determination. We should all be Cephases. We should all have this rock-like determination.

And then secondly, he says, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. The word apostle here means one sent from someone else. And while we have no apostles on the face of the earth today in the primary sense, in a secondary sense, every one of us who are Christians should be apostles.

We are someone sent to someone else with a message to share. Say, may I ask, are you an ambassador for Christ today? Are you an apostle? If not, you should be. Peter was an apostle in the primary sense, and he had the credentials of miracles to prove it.

He could heal the sick. Some could raise the dead. And they could turn a stick into a serpent and the serpent back into the stick.

And they could perform miracles. Now you say, Bob, we can't perform miracles. I can't heal the sick and I can't do these other things.

You still have credentials of a miracle. And you know what that miracle is? A miracle of a changed life. That's it.

A changed life. Do you have the miracle today as a Christian? Do you have the authority? Do you have the dynamic? Do you have the miracle of a changed life to present to the people of the world? I've often used this illustration. I love to use it, even though it's not the most ethical one.

I got my father's permission to do it, though. He says, tell everyone. He says, I can't tell them.

You tell them. But for sixty-four years, my dad was a man who did not know Christ as his Savior. At the age of fourteen, sitting in a meeting similar to this with his sixteen brothers and sisters, but they were not, all sixteen of them were not there.

They hadn't come along yet. He said his mother and dad used to sit on the second row and dad would sit there with a stick just long enough to reach the head farthest away on the front row. And when that head would wiggle just one way or the other, pow, he'd get the stick on the head.

And he grew up in the fear of God and the nurtured admonition of the Word of God. But at the age of fourteen, someone was preaching the Word of God and they offered him a choice. Which shall it be? Jesus Christ or hell? Jesus Christ or your own way? And at the age of fourteen, he says, no, I'll not have Jesus Christ.

I want to go my own way. And until he was sixty-four years of age, he ran from God every day of his life. He ran from God through every state in the Union and in Canada and in Mexico.

But everywhere he went, there was someone there to give him a gospel track. There was someone there that would preach the gospel on the radio. There was someone that would meet him on the street and witness.

And for, until the time he was sixty-four years of age, he drowned in his sorrow in alcohol. He drowned in his sorrow with his lustful living. And in the most valuable years of my life, I didn't have... But finally the time came in Greenville, South Carolina, where his little granddaughter Sandy, or Susie, put her arms around him.

One day they were driving down the highway in the street there, Main Street, and she slipped over on the front seat and stood up only as a little three-and-a-half-year-old girl. She says, you know, I wish you'd give your heart to the Lord and be saved, because I don't want to see you die and go to hell. I want to see you in heaven.

Dad said, he took his hat off in the car and said, God, this little three-and-a-half-year-old girl knows more about it than I do. And as he drove down to Main Street in Greenville, South Carolina, he opened his heart and trusted Christ. Now what I'm saying is this.

From the hour, and only I can tell you this, but I know it to be true. From the hour that my dad accepted the Lord, he was a changed man complete. People say, well, I can't give up drinking.

My dad drunk enough to float a battleship. He gave it up immediately. I can't quit smoking.

He quit smoking immediately. I can't live a clean life. I'm so involved in sin.

I've never seen a more beautiful, clean break in all my life than a man sixty-five, nearly sixty-five years of age. He took his hand for Christ, and while he may not be a dynamic witness at his age today of seventy-seven or so, it's just a beautiful picture for me to see my dad living his life. He has the miracle of a changed life.

He can't witness. He never went to Bible school. He has never studied the Bible very much in his life.

But at seventy-seven years of age, just by his walk and by the appearance among the people who knew him before he was saved, he's a testimony. And you should have that testimony. You should have that

credential.

You may not have an education in the Bible. You may not have all the background that Peter had. You may not have all the great experiences that he had.

You may not be an apostle. But bless God, you've got the same credentials of a miracle of a changed life. I just wonder this morning if there's any of us here, and we've tried to witness and fail, down at work or at school or our next-door neighbor.

And everything we do, it seems to come to naught. And I've never led anyone to Christ, we say. Could it be that you're not authenticating your witness by the miracle of a changed life? And rather than coming out from among the world and being separate and inviting them to come to the Lord with you at a new way of life, a new change in life, and new objectives and new goals, could it be that you're trying to go over on their side and look like them and dress like them and talk like them and have the same interest in life that I do? And you're no different from me.

And I believe today this is the great sin of the church, is becoming like the world in every aspect, and then we have a weak, lifeless, chicken-noodle-dead testimony because we cannot authenticate it with the Word of God and with the miracle of a changed life. Peter, an apostle. And then he says, an apostle of Jesus Christ, that's the one that sent him forth, to the strangers scattered throughout these various provinces.

Now the little word stranger is also an interesting word. If you look it up sometimes, you'll find that it's made up of three Greek words. And again, don't let me impress you.

I know a little Greek, a little Hebrew. A little Greek has a hamburger stand on this corner and the Hebrew has a clothing stand on the other. That's just about the size of it.

But I read after those who do know it. And they say that this word strangers is a special word that consists of three Greek words, para, which means alongside of, epi means upon, and demos means people of a demon or heathen city. And when you put the word together, para, epi, demos, it means people who have settled down among other people of a heathen city, under the strangers.

Under the Christians who are living in a dead world. The strangers. And so we discover here that Christians have settled down alongside the unsaved.

You know, Peter, God bless dear Peter, he never, even more than the Apostle Paul, if you read the writings of Peter, you'll find that he never ever lets the Christian forget that he's a witness in this world. His prime function is to witness to the unsaved. That's right.

He says, you're in a strange world, you're in a foreign country, you're not to settle down and look like them and join them and be involved in their causes. Come out from among them and get involved in the work of the Lord and preach the gospel to them. I remember one night, about nine or ten years old, maybe older, maybe twelve, I don't recall the year.

But on the way home one night with some other fellas from the YMCA, we used to cross a graveyard. And of course we never did that too much, but when we had a group of us, we'd do it just for the thrill of crossing this graveyard about ten o'clock at night. And of all times in my life, I've never been able to figure it out.

The police were out in the middle of the graveyard, they had their hearse there, and they had a lot of people with flashlights, and they were digging up a body out of a graveyard at night. So I said to my, many a times, and I said, why don't they wait till the next day, he's not going anywhere. But they were digging up this body.

And I just happened to come right down our little path, all of us fellas together, when I saw them lift that body out of the grave and open it. And I saw a dead, corrupted body. I don't know how long it had been in the grave, but I never want to see another one, never want to smell another one.

But you know, that's exactly what it is to preach the gospel by the Christians. We're in a dead world. All the people of the world who do not know Jesus are like dead bodies.

And so the Christian is told, you listen, you're walking through a graveyard, and you're supposed to just preach the words in these dead bodies. Well, how come? But you just tell them that Christ loved them and died for their sins upon Calvary's cross, and they are to come and believe and trust Him and be saved. And lo and behold, Christians, for 15 years now, I've had the wonderful privilege of circulating inside a graveyard.

And ever so often, it's like standing on a grave and you preach the word down to them, and lo and behold, the ground opens up and out. Miracle? Yes, it's a miracle. Miracle of God.

And you live today in a graveyard, a dismal, desolate, dead, dry graveyard, corrupt graveyard. But you just go forth in the Lord's name, and you preach the word, and you vindicate that word with a miracle of a changed life, and there'll come a resurrection. And this is the same thought here.

He says, I'm writing to you Christians who have settled down in a graveyard, heathen city, down alongside the unsaved. And then he says, unto the strangers scattered. I believe that the word scattered here is in reference to the dispersion of Israel, way back possibly 600 years before the birth of Christ, and of Judah possibly 400 years before the birth of Christ.

And God had broken up the Jewish nation, and each father had to take his wife and his children and run for his life, and he would go to a different section of the world and settle down, and maybe open a little business, a little clothing store, a little jewelry shop or something. And there he was, away from the rest of his relatives and loved ones and friends, and he's out in the middle of nowhere, and then finally in due time, God sent along the apostles and the gospel, and on the day of Pentecost, thousands went back to different sections, witnessing for Christ, and these Christian Jews, or these Jews became Christian Jews. They were strangers scattered throughout the world.

And I love what Kenneth Weiss made, the statement that he made on this word scattered in his verse-by-verse and word-for-word study of the little epistle of Peter. He says, we are where we are because God placed us there for a job to do. Have you ever been in, maybe you live here in Minneapolis, or maybe you live in a certain section of town, and you're lonesome, and you're wondering, Lord, why do you have me here? I'm from back in another state somewhere, and my husband is from somewhere else.

The business brought me here. Oh, no, the business didn't. You are where you are today if you're a Christian, and maybe even if you're not a Christian, maybe he's called you to be saved, and right where you are, you are to live for the Lord and serve the Lord, and you are to spread the good news of the gospel to the graveyard in which you're in.

You are providentially placed right where you are, right now, that you might be a channel through which the Spirit of God can use you. Have you realized this? You know, if you ever hold this thing in front of you, if you hold it long enough and think about it long enough, all of a sudden it will activate your life. You don't care again whether you live in Minneapolis, or California, or North Carolina, or Florida, or Texas, or anywhere else.

You're ready to go for God right on the spot. You don't have to go to the foreign mission field. You don't have to go to another county.

You don't even have to go downtown. Right where you are. You see, God is God.

God knows everything, and He knows where He wants you to be. And you are where you are, and you are what you are, because God brought you there, and you have a job to do. In Romans chapter 14 and verse 7, there's a little verse.

Let's look at it there, because it will stick in your mind if you look at it. Romans chapter 14 and verse 7. Every Christian should realize this. Romans 14 and 7 says, You know what that means? That means that everywhere you are, you have an influence on others.

And everyone with whom you come in contact has an influence on you. And you're not alone in this world. And so, you have a job to do, and your job is to reflect the Lord Jesus Christ, reflect the victory of a Christian life.

You're not alone. Sometimes you say, Well, I've never witnessed for years. Never mind that.

You just live for the Lord. Your life is your witness in many cases. You don't have to be a dynamic preacher, a loud mouth.

You don't have to be someone from high school or college or seminary. You just let that life shine, the miracle of a transformed life. And then they'll come and say, Listen, what makes you different from us? And then you can say, Thank you, Lord.

And you can give a little witness. I let the Lord come into my heart and life a few years ago, and He's given me new objectives. He's changed my whole way of life.

And there's your witness. But let's go on. Verse 2, and this is really the heart.

I wish we had more time. That clock, I thought I could talk fast, but the clock can run faster than I thought. Verse 2, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied as a result of salvation. Grace, daily sustaining grace, and peace, heart, peace, with God. The battle is over.

We surrender. There's peace. But here in verse 2, we see three steps that God took to bring us to Christ.

We're not even in it, not our efforts at all. Blessed be God. Verse 3, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

Do you know what the word elect here means? Would you like to know what it means? It means to pick out. And you know it still means that 2,000 years after they wrote it, he wrote it. The picked out ones, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

And the word foreknowledge, you know what the word foreknowledge means? Look it up sometime, you'll find that it means deliberate judgment. Deliberate judgment. Those picked out according to the deliberate judgment of God.

Now you can wrassle around with it all that you please, but that's what the word says. That is, those of us who are saved, you are saved because God deliberately picked you out to be saved way back before the foundation of the world. You ever notice that the nation of Israel was selected at the foundation of the world, but the church was chosen before the foundation of the world.

And so here's the first step in God's great plan of salvation, bringing the sinner to Christ. God decided that he'd save you. He determined in his own heart and he picked you out.

Well, I'm going to tell you that in a minute. But there's a second step there. Notice it says, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit.

And the word sanctification here means setting apart. And the Greek makes it very clear that it's the Spirit that does the setting apart. Way back, long before the earth was ever made, God decided that he was going to have a church and he was going to take the people out of this world and he's going to save some and he's going to make a new world and this new world consists of all those who come to Christ as their saviors.

And the Spirit does the work. The word obedience here would suggest to me the act of faith found in verse 5. And to the obedience of the Spirit and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. And this is the third step in God's plan of salvation.

God the Father thought it up. He decided that he would take the people out of this world, some from the people of the world rather, and form a church. The Spirit of God goes out and he does all this work and he convicts us of our sins and he awakens within us a desire to be saved.

And it says through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. And I believe this word sprinkling here, according to Hebrews chapter 9 and verse 19, and if you're a student write that reference down, Hebrews 9, 19. It is a type of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

God the Son cleanses the believing sinner in his precious blood. Just like the priest in the Old Testament when he sprinkled the blood upon the people. Think now, sprinkling of the blood.

He identified the people with the blood and the blood with the people. And it was in type, a type of salvation. And so we have in verse 2, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit at work.

God the Father chooses the sinner to salvation. God the Spirit brings the sinner thus chosen to the act of faith. And God the Son saves his soul by his precious shed blood the moment that he expresses faith in Christ.

But all of a sudden we hit a problem here. You say, now wait a minute Bob, I'm not a Christian. I've never been saved.

I've never been born again. I don't know that I'm a believer. How do I know that I'm one of those that God has chosen? Maybe God didn't choose me.

Maybe I'm one of the people of the world that's going to be lost from now on. But I don't want to be lost. I want to go to heaven.

Did God or did God not choose me? Well, number one, if you even have a desire to be saved, this is an indication that God chose you. You see, for the man, the natural heart of man seeketh not after God. And so I ask you this question, yes or no, do you want to be saved? Would you like to go to heaven when you die or would you like to go to hell? No, I don't want to go to hell.

I want to go to heaven. I want to be saved. But this is a very good indication right now that the Spirit of God may be dealing with you.

And God is pulling you to himself and you thank God for it if you have a desire to be saved. But simpler and better than that, you just come and place your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and let God save you, then you know it. It's not hard to believe.

You believe in things every day. You believe in electricity, you believe in your automobile, you believe in the food that you eat. You have the ability to believe a billion times a day.

It's not, people say, I can't believe. Don't say you can't believe. You do it every day of your life.

You can't believe in Christ, but you can believe. And God wants you to take this faith, this belief that you express in hundreds of people every day, hundreds of machines, hundreds of events, and He wants you to take this faith and place it in the Lord Jesus Christ and say, Lord, I believe you. I believe that you'll do what you said you can do.

Bob, you're hedging. You're beating around the bush. How do you reconcile the sovereignty of God with man's responsibility to choose? That's where it all boils down to.

God says, whosoever believeth, he that believeth not is condemned already. A hundred times I can show you in the epistles alone where man must be, he must express faith in Christ, and the responsibility seems to be on man. But over here it seems that God did it all.

How do you reconcile man's responsibility with the sovereign will of God? Now we've got a problem, and it's six minutes to twelve. You know, I always say that when I find myself in a bind up and for the sake of time, we'll have to hurry on here, and we can skip over and keep on, but I'm not going to hurry on. How do you reconcile these two? Would you like me to tell you how I reconcile? I realize this is not without difficulty.

But here's how to reconcile the sovereignty of God, and believe me, universities have been divided over it. It's just so simple it makes you laugh when you think about it. Now some of my hard-nosed theological brethren here may meet me at the back door, but you just think about it for a few weeks.

Think about it until the first of November, and then I'll be in California. How do you reconcile these two things? Well, I think if you look it up, you'll find that majority-wise, the sovereignty of God, now listen carefully, is always a corporate, it's always a collective thing. But the will of man is always individual.

You don't find God, except in types, when he picks out an individual to be a type of the church, you never find God electing to save an individual, or to send an individual to hell. Now you just think about that. Don't jump too quick, don't growl too quick.

Esau, what about Esau? Yes, he was a type, a type of a nation of Israel, a type of God rejected, a type of the Christ rejected. What about Paul? He was elected, yes, he's a type of the church. In fact, in the very verses where he says he was elected, that he might be an example, he says.

And all through the Bible you'll find that election and God's sovereignty, predestination, color, anything you please, it has to do with the corporate body, all who come out as a unit. But the faith of man, man's responsibility, rests entirely upon him to express that faith. Well, where did faith come from? Ah, that's another subject.

And for the sake of time, we're not going to get into that subject. But let me illustrate. Here's a bus.

Better still, here's a jet plane out here in the driveway. And that jet plane says Fremont, California, on the front of it. And out by the door, the pilot, and he says, at 1230, this plane is taking off and we're going to Fremont.

All who get on the plane will go to Fremont for a Bible conference. Anyone wish to come? Well, I for one would be there, if I could get back by tonight. But everyone, see the plane itself is picked out.

It is scheduled to go to California. And everyone who steps on that plane will go to California. Now, assuming the illustration, of course it falls far short, I'm sure.

But let's suppose that plane, and God was the pilot of the plane. You see, then it wouldn't crash. There would be no risk.

God says, it is going to California. And so everyone, the corporate body, everyone who steps on the plane will go to California. But the individual choice is yours, whosoever will.

And so you say, well, it's going to snow here this afternoon, I think I'll go to California. Get in a good Bible conference, have some Christian fellowship. And so you decide, you weigh the evidence back and forth, and you say, well, listen, I think I'll get off the plane.

And so you step on it. But He didn't force you. He didn't force you.

The only people that are ever elected or predestined to go to hell were those who either represent or are a part of the same corporate body that rejects Jesus Christ, and as a group, they are predestined for hell. Wells without water, twice dead, God says already there, in Jude and 2 Timothy. I realize we have some bumps here and there, but you just think it out for a while.

And so you see, while the plane and the corporate body go, it's still up to the individual to make that decision. And if there is anyone in this audience today unsaved, if you have never settled a sin question, you don't know, and you're waiting for God to do it all, and you're waiting for God to move upon you and to get a funny feeling up and down your back, and you're waiting for some great circumstance or some great climax to drive you into the kingdom of God against your will, watch out, you may die and go to hell. You know why? Because God eventually puts it all right back on you.

He's done everything that He's going to do. And if you wake up at the end of this life at a Christless grave, in a Christless eternity, in the caverns of the damned forever, if there comes a time in your life in which God pulls you out of the grave and you stand before the great white throne judgment, and you hear the God of all the earth pronounce you guilty of sin and consign you, He's done all that He'll ever do. Now, it seems that each of us, each individual in the whole world, God gives at least one chance to be saved.

Somehow or another, He reaches down into this graveyard that we talked about, and He gets under the body of it, and pumps just like conviction, call it what you please, but it's really the work of the Holy Spirit. And this individual hears it at one way or another, miniature form, and he says, yes, I'll take it. And God gives him more life than he saves, or he says, no, I don't even want what I know about it.

And that says, all right, that's your chance. And He lowers him back, and he's eternally lost. Now, I am coming to believe, in fact I have it home in my mind.

I've changed the tenses, I've changed the words to include this thought. I believe that in every person's life there comes at least one opportunity. In fact, you may have a thousand opportunities, but somewhere in these thousand opportunities you make one choice that lasts forever, one way or the other.

And it's your responsibility. God puts the hot potato in your hand. Now, what are you going to do with it? And may I ask, what are you going to do with it? The time is up.

I can't believe, I don't understand. Well, neither do we understand. God wants you to commit yourself to something you don't understand.

You don't understand electricity, but I'll bet every one of you have electric lights in your home. You've got the benefit of it, but you don't understand the principle. But there are so many hypocrites in the Church.

The fact that there are hypocrites proves that there's a genuine somewhere. The reason we have counterfeit money is because they want it to be like the real. It looks like it, but it isn't.

But that doesn't condemn good money. People don't throw away all the cash they have in their banks because someone has some counterfeit money going around somewhere. It just complements the real thing.

And for every one Christian that's ever bit the dust and fell, and fell into immorality or sin or denied the Lord, bless God, there's been ten thousand that's gone on strong. And you have before you the miracle of thousands of changed lives. There is no excuse for anyone in this room or anyone in the whole world, really, to reject God's offer.

What have you got to give up? What have you got to lose? Everything is for you. There's nothing against you. No good thing will He withhold from them that walk upright.

Come unto me, all you that labor in a heavy laden, and I'll give you rest. God has everything to give you if you come to Him, and you have everything to lose if you don't. And it seems that He has awakened you just enough now to hear.

He's given you the ability to believe. What are you going to do? Shall we bow our heads and pray? Today's my last day. This is the last hour.

I wonder if there's anyone here for two weeks now or maybe for months, you've fought that battle, your heart is thumped, your knees are knocked, you're shook all over. Why not just lovingly and very pleasantly say, God, I'm not fighting any longer. I'm going to accept the Lord.

I'm making that all-out commitment. Let God save me. For those of you who are saved, remember you're strangers in a graveyard.

God has called you to be a witness. You see, your prime job is to be a witness, otherwise He'd take you home to heaven right now. The moment He saved you, you'd go home to heaven.

In fact, you could worship better in heaven than you can on earth. Your prime function, I believe, is to live a life, a miracle life, before others and tell them how you got that way. Strangers scattered.

Now, Father, we thank You for our time together this morning, and we pray that the Spirit of God will just take the thoughts of Thy Word, whatever it has been of Thyself, bless them to our hearts, those of us who are saved. We pray, O God, Thou would revive us, pick us up, O God, use us. We marvel at how You could use a human being.

Why would You save us, but yet You did? Why would You use us, and yet we know that You want to use us more than we want to be used? And so we pray, God, that Thou will, if necessary through circumstances, remove what is hindering us. Take from us the things that we love more than we love You. It may be a loved one.

It may be gold in life. It may be our business. But, O God, we know that this life will be over in a few years, and then we face eternity.

And, our Father, if our affections are not placed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray that Thou will quickly and speedily remove at all cost anything and everything on which we have placed our affections, so that we might cut a straight course in this life for Christ. Help us to forsake all and follow Him. And for those who do not know Christ, Father, again we pray that even this hour will be the time in which there is an all-out, once-eternal commitment to Christ, and that salvation will take place.

Bless the word to our hearts and dismiss us with our blessings, we pray in His name. Amen. Our meeting is over, but if you'd like to talk to me personally, I'd be happy to see you.

Otherwise, if you'd like to talk later about spiritual things, salvation, or anything else, call me at Mr. and Mrs. Davidson's home, and I'll be happy to meet you anywhere you wish. This meeting is over.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9781.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/bob-bruton/1-peter-1-minneapolis-conference/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net